(4)

A SERMON

Preach'd at the

Cathedral Church

OF

St. *PETER* in *YORK*,

Before the RIGHT HONOURABLE the

Lord Chief Baron *Pengelly*,

AT THE

ASSIZES

Held there *March* 15. 1728.

By *SAMUEL BAKER*, A. M.
Rector of *Settrington*, and *Dunnington*, and Chaplain to his Grace *SCROOP* Duke of *Bridgwater*.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

WILLIAM HARVEY *Esq;*

High-Sheriff of the County of *YORK*,

And to the

Gentlemen of the Grand-Jury.

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The following SERMON

Is DEDICATED

By, GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient

Humble Servant,

SAMUEL BAKER.

Proverbs XIV. 34.

Righteouſneſs exalteth a Nation, but Sin is a Reproach to any People.

AT this Time, when the ſolemn Appearance of ſo many Ranks and Orders of Men is deſigned to attend the Diſtribution of Juſtice from the Laws of their Country; whence the Injur'd expect the Redreſs of their Wrongs, the Tranſgreſſors wait the Puniſhment of their Faults, and honeſt Men look for the future Security of their Fortunes: It cannot be improper to do right to that Principle, which actuates, and gives Life to ſo neceſſary, and wholſome Proceedings; by recommending the Uſe, and Excellency of Virtue, and Righteouſneſs.

FOR next to the Fatherly Care of the Almighty in providing for the Sons of Men, nothing tends ſo immediately to promote the publick Good, as Righteouſneſs. But tho' this Truth carries with it the ſtrongeſt Evidence, yet Experience ſhews it wants to be inculcated and inſiſted upon: for the Principles of ſome few, and the Practice of great Multitudes openly contradict, and call it in queſtion. Hence ſure it will be reaſonable to uſe the ſame Way and Method of Arguing, as if in Fact this Propoſition was new, and not before diſcover'd, what the Royal Preacher has long ſince obſerved to the World, *that Righteouſneſs exalteth a Nation, but Sin is a Reproach to any People.*

WE are not to expect a Chain of Reaſoning in this Book of *Proverbs*, for they are a Collection of wiſe Obſervations promiſcuouſly put together without any premeditated Order, the Overflowings of an exuberant Knowledge, not confined by any Rules of Art; ſo that without looking for the Meaning of the Text from the Connection with what precedes, or follows; we muſt attend to the plain Signification of the Words, as they lie before us, according to their common Uſage in Scripture.

RIGHTE-

RIGHTEOUSNESS is a Word of very great Latitude; it imports Juſtice, Clemency, Veracity, and Charity, and is often (as here) oppoſed to Sin, and Wickedneſs. It comprehends under it all ſuch Qualities, and Diſpoſitions, as are acceptable before God, and amiable in the Sight of Men; and ſo may be underſtood to be equivalent to the general, and commonly received Word Virtue; as its Contrary, Unrighteouſneſs may be to Vice. For it is very obſervable that Vice, or vicious, never occur in Scripture; nor Virtue in the Old Teſtament, and but in one or two Places at moſt in the New. And yet it would be very ſtrange, that the Scripture, whoſe whole Purport is to render us virtuous, ſhould ſcarce ever ſo much as once mention the Word. But Righteouſneſs, and Unrighteouſneſs we meet with every where; and from their being ſo commonly made uſe of, it will be very reaſonable to conclude, they ſignify the ſame thing as Virtue and Vice. Therefore if they are ſo received, they imply here that *Righteouſneſs, or Virtue exalteth*, or advanceth the Honour and Happineſs of *a Nation*; *Sin or Vice*, is *a Reproach* to, or brings Diſgrace and Ruin on *any People*.

THIS I ſhall endeavour to prove by ſhewing,

I. THAT

I. THAT Virtue is an infallible Security of a Nation's Happineſs, and Vice a certain Cauſe of its Miſery, as they ſeverally affect the Divine Favour.

II. THAT Virtue and Vice have in themſelves a natural Tendency to Happineſs, or Miſery.

I. VIRTUE is an infallible Security of a Nation's Happineſs, and Vice a certain Cauſe of its Miſery, as they ſeverally affect the Divine Favour.

ALL the Happineſs a Nation can enjoy muſt flow from the Bounty and Favour of Heaven, into which it muſt ſolely, and ultimately be reſolved. For tho' God has inſtituted the Laws and Orders of Nature, which are fixed, and unalterable; and every Event is directed by its proper Cauſe, like an Arrow from a Bow to its reſpective Mark: For Example, a Perſon caſt into the Fire ſhall be burned, and another thrown to the wild Beaſts ſhall be devoured; yet ſometimes Divine Providence viſibly interpoſeth, and then the raging Fire ſhall loſe its Heat, and the Hungry Lion ſhall forget its Fierceneſs. Such extraordinary Favour from the Almighty, the beſt Men are not to preſume upon, nor yet if natural Means fail, totally to deſpair of.

BUT

BUT without raiſing our Expectations ſo high, this we may ſafely depend upon, that Divine Providence does (tho' in a leſs viſible manner,) concur with, and incline natural Cauſes from their apparent Tendency to very different and unexpected Iſſues. The cruel Envy of *Joſeph*'s Brethren directly aimed at his innocent Blood, brought about his Advancement, and their future Preſervation: The Hand of Providence was very viſible in this happy Event, and *Joſeph* acknowledges it, when he told his Brethren, * *So now it was not you that ſent me, but God.* From ſuch Inſtances we rightly collect God's over-ruling Providence here below, which is the Foundation of our Addreſſes to the Throne of Heaven for temporal Bleſſings: Otherwiſe Succeſs in War, Deliverance in Sickneſs, and fruitful Seaſons, would be very unfit Matter for Prayer; and to deſire ſuch Bleſſings from Heaven, an unneceſſary, if not a mocking Manner of applying to the Almighty. The Voice of Reaſon, and Revelation loudly declare Righteouſneſs and Virtue to be pleaſing in God's Sight; and Wickedneſs to be an Abomination to him, What pleaſeth a Juſt God will be accompanied by his Favour; what diſpleaſeth him, with his Anger. Proſperity, and Happineſs,

* Gen. xlv. 8.

are the conſtant Attendants of the firſt; and Calamity and Miſery the Followers of the laſt: Conſequently Happineſs waits upon Righteouſneſs, and Virtue; and Unhappineſs purſueth Sin, and Vice.

THE Scripture is full of Divine Declarations to this Purpoſe; and agreeable to them was God's Dealing with the *Jewiſh* Nation, whom he had ſingled out from all other People of the Earth, for his own proper Subjects, and Kingdom. In their Hiſtory we find that their Happineſs always kept Pace with their Goodneſs; whilſt they were obedient, and Righteous, they were an happy, and flouriſhing People; but on the contrary, when they were wicked, they were a miſerable Nation: And tho' a merciful God bore long with their Stubbornneſs, and Wickedneſs, yet when they had filled up the Meaſure of their Iniquities; This Favourite Nation of Heaven, once the Wonder, and Envy of the whole Earth, was rooted out, that they Now are no more a People: And the Remnants of them are ſcatter'd about the World as Vagrants, and as Juſt and Everlaſting Monuments of the Divine Wrath againſt a wicked, and ſinful Nation.

INSTANCES might be made in other Kingdoms, whoſe Ruin in Scripture has been attributed entirely to their Sins, ſuch as

as *Babylon*, *Nineveh*, *Tyre*, and others, which the Compaſs of this Diſcourſe will permit to mention only.

SUCH has been God's Dealing with wicked Nations, and ſuch we may ſafely pronounce always will be: And tho' his merciful Hand is more readily ſtretched out to ſave, than to deſtroy; yet for a wicked People to be long happy, is as much beyond all reaſonable Expectation, as it is above all juſt Deſert.

THIS Argument has been carried ſtill farther by ſome of great Eminence, and Learning; whoſe Sentiments have been, that National Sins require National Puniſhments, in order to ſatisfy God's Juſtice; ſince this Life is the only Time of rewarding or puniſhing any Society or Community as ſuch. There certainly is a great deal of Truth in it, and ſingly conſider'd, it would be moſt exactly juſt in God to do ſo, and highly reaſonable to think he would always obſerve this Method of acting, could we ſuppoſe it never to interfere with any other of the Divine Purpoſes: So that when God's Diſpenſations are otherwiſe, we are not impiouſly to think him a careleſs, and unrighteous Spectator of human Affairs, but muſt conclude that Providence has ſomething farther in view, which our ſhort

Sight cannot reach, and which in the Scale of Divine Wiſdom out-weighs the Reaſon of doing ſtrict Juſtice on a guilty Nation.

FROM theſe Obſervations it appears, that Righteouſneſs and Virtue entitle us to God's Favour, and the certain Conſequences of it, Proſperity, and Happineſs; and that Sin, and Vice juſtly draw down his Diſpleaſure, and Judgments. Hence the Concluſion will be exactly true, that Virtue is an infallible Security of a Nation's Happineſs, and Vice a certain Cauſe of its Miſery.

II. I PROCEED to ſhew that Virtue, and Vice have in themſelves a natural Tendency to Happineſs, or Miſery: So that thoſe who are not thoroughly convinced of God's interpoſing Providence, but who think that he who * *maketh his Sun to riſe on the Evil, and on the Good, and ſendeth Rain on the Juſt, and on the Unjuſt*; doth in all other Caſes entirely leave the Event of things to the common Courſe, and Order of Nature; even theſe Men muſt be ſatisfy'd that Righteouſneſs tends to a Nation's Proſperity, † *as the Sparks fly upwards.* To prove this, it will be ſufficient to give a Repreſentation

* St. Matt. v. 45. † Job v. 7.

both

both of a righteous and vitious Nation. To ſhew them, is to praiſe the one, and expoſe the other. To exhibit a vertuous Nation, is the ſame thing as to point out an Happy one; and to do the contrary, is to ſet forth a miſerable one. Or, firſt by examining when a Kingdom is exalted, and when it is reproached, it will be eaſie for the dulleſt Eye to diſcover that Vertue preſides at the Helm of the firſt, and Vice bears ſway in the laſt.

A KINGDOM is exalted when it is ſuch as a wiſe Man would find deſirable to live in; when the Country abounds with all the Conveniences, and Pleaſures of Life; where Induſtry is encouraged, and Merit rewarded; where every one is ſecure from being moleſted in any of his Poſſeſſions, and Enjoyments; either from foreign Enemies, domeſtick Rebels, oppreſſive Violence, or treacherous Villany. In ſhort, when a Kingdom is in real Strength, Tranquillity and Credit at home, and in Eſteem, and Reputation abroad *. *Happy are the People that are in ſuch a Caſe.*

ON the contrary, when the Neceſſaries, and Comforts of Life are difficult to come at, and when attained are uncertain, and

* *Pſal.* cxliv. 15.

precarious

precarious in their Enjoyment; when the People are in perpetual fear of being diſturbed, and harraſſed in their deareſt Rights, and higheſt Poſſeſſions, from potent foreign Enemies, from ſeditious, and rebellious Subjects, from corrupt Magiſtrates, rapacious Governors, from baſe Informers, falſe Witneſſes, Robbers and Murderers: When Diſtruſt, and Jealouſie encompaſs an honeſt Man on every Side: When a Nation is filled with Suſpicions and Fears at Home, and is deſpiſed and abhorred Abroad: Then is it moſt compleatly miſerable.

LET us ſee, therefore, whether the happy Kingdom here deſcribed, doth not exactly reſemble a Vertuous Nation, and its Reverſe a Wicked one. What is the firſt, but the lovely Picture of a Wiſe, Juſt, and Brave People? And is not the laſt the ugly Features of a Fooliſh, Oppreſſed, and Mean-ſpirited Nation? But to examine a little whether the Deſcription above given anſwers or no: And in the firſt place as to what concerns the Conveniences, and Pleaſures of Life. Theſe indeed originally muſt be in the Country it ſelf; but if they are engroſſed by a few, and are not to be come at by Men of induſtry and merit; or if they are liable to be taken away, when an Arbitrary Governor ſhall think them an agreeable Prize: It is much the ſame thing, what

what ever the natural Conveniences of a Country are. For there can be but little Comfort in the proſpect of attaining any good thing, which we have little, or no ſecurity of preſerving, and the Greatneſs of which cauſes the more Danger of loſing it. Beſides Labour, and Art increaſe very much the natural Conveniences of a Country: But who will ſpend the Pains of his Head, and Hands for that which it is moſt probable others will reap the greateſt Fruit of? So much do Injuſtice, and Oppreſſion leſſen the Conveniences of, and conſequently impoveriſh a Country.

But when the governing Powers are reſtrained, and guided by Juſtice, and Equity, every one is ſure of enjoying the Fruits of his Art, and Induſtry in Peace and Security. And when this Principle of Juſtice diffuſeth it ſelf through the whole Community, then ſhall all be ſafe from Violence, Treachery, and Villany. The Magiſtrate would have no occaſion to paſs any diſmal Sentence; Pains and Penalties would be uſeleſs; and we ſhould never ſee any wretched Victims yielding up their Lives to the offended Laws.

And as Vertue is a Security againſt all Danger at home, ſo is it the beſt Guard againſt all Powers abroad: For when a Nation

tion is renowned for it, when it is united in its Counſels and Courage, when it is true to its Engagements and Treaties; when it is generous, and grateful in returning good Offices, and brave and reſolute in reſenting ill ones: Then ſhall that Nation be in Credit, and Eſteem Abroad; its Friendſhip ſhall be courted, and relied on, and its Enmity avoided and dreaded. But if a Nation is factious, and quarrelſome, treacherous, and falſe, if it breaks its Faith with thoſe with whom it was linked by the ſtrongeſt Ties of Alliance, Friendſhip and Gratitude, and makes court to the Common Enemy at the Expence of its Friends, and if it ſets down cowardly and tamely under the greateſt Affronts, and Injury, ſuch a People muſt be vaſtly infamous: Their Friendſhip ſhall be lightly valued; or if Recourſe be had to it, when it has ſerved the Turn of thoſe, that have made their Uſe, and Advantage of it, it ſhall be ſlighted and thrown like Scaffolding aſide. On the other part, its Enmity ſhall be as much diſregarded, its Power will become deſpicable, and its Cowardice ſhall draw on perpetual Inſults and Injuries. It ſhall become the Prey of ſome more powerful Neighbour, or be deſtroyed by its own Hands. So much doth Juſtice, Concord, and Courage tend to a Nation's Honour, and Happineſs, ſo much doth Injuſtice, Perfidiouſneſs, Strife, and Mean-ſpiritedneſs

tend

tend to a Nation's Diſgrace and Ruin; or, in other Words, ſo glorious and happy are a Juſt, United and Brave People: So deſpicable, and miſerable is an Unjuſt, Contentious, and Cowardly Nation.

THIS Argument might be purſued more largely thorough all the ſeveral kinds, and degrees of Vertue, and Vice: It would be eaſie to manifeſt their Influence in the moſt important publick Relations, and likewiſe in the more private, but yet very weighty ones; to ſhew how Vertue makes good Princes, and loyal Subjects, kind Huſbands, and loving Wives, tender Parents, and obedient Children, gentle Maſters, and diligent Servants; how Men by thus diſcharging theſe ſeveral Relations, are Vertuous, and Righteous, and thereby render thoſe reſpective States, and Conditions of Life eaſy, agreeable and happy. But enough has been already ſaid to convince any reaſonable Perſon that Vertue is an infallible Security of, or rather indeed is a Nation's Honour and Happineſs, and Vice the certain Cauſe of its Diſgrace, and Ruin, or, in the Language of the Text, *Righteouſneſs exalteth a Nation, but Sin is a reproach to any People.*

AFTER this Deſcription of a vertuous and happy People, it will reaſonably be expected, that we ſhould conſider, what Pre-

tences we of this Nation have to the Character of a Righteous Kingdom, and what Grounds we have from thence of Happineſs and Proſperity.

WERE the ardent Wiſhes, and the moſt earneſt Exhortations of good Men to prevail, the publick Vertues, and Happineſs ſhould be more, and greater than has been, or can poſſibly be repreſented. But compleat degrees of them, the Imperfection of Mankind will not allow of, humane Paſſions being too ſtrong for perfect Vertue and Felicity.

BUT ſtill we have ſome things to boaſt of, as well as others to lament. Vertue has not left us deſolate, nor Happineſs utterly forſaken us.

WE have the Excellency, and Juſtice of a Conſtitution to glory of, in which We are bleſſed above all the Nations under Heaven; and theſe may not improperly be ſtiled the ſtanding Vertues of a Kingdom. Our Rights of all kind are ſecured to us, both Religious and Civil: No Man is liable to be torn from his Friends, and Eſtate, and hurried into the Priſon of a mercileſs Inquiſition: No one can be ſtripped of his Eſtate by Violence, and Rapin, by ſuborned Informers, or an arbitrary Sentence. For

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a legal and equitable Defence will always be admitted, and the Judgment to be paſſed, is firſt to be confirmed by our Fellow-Subjects, and Neighbours. Nothing of our Fortunes can be touched without our own Conſent ſignified by Perſons of our own chooſing, Men of Figure, and Eſtate, who are intruſted with the Guardianſhip of our Liberties, and Poſſeſſions. We live in * *a Land flowing with Milk and Honey*, furniſhed with all the Neceſſaries of Life, either from the Benignity of Nature, or the Art, and Induſtry of its Inhabitants. Every Man enjoys the Gifts of Providence, or the Fruit of his own Skill, and Diligence, without the leaſt ſuſpicion of any Danger of being plundered by a griping and wicked Governour: Nay, ſo high is the publick Faith in Credit, that we think our Riches ſafer in the keeping of the Government, than in our own private Coffers.

In the adminiſtration of Juſtice (allowing for ſome Inconveniences, the neceſſary reſult of all humane Inſtitutions) we have great reaſon to think our ſelves very happy. For we have all our Differences honeſtly and wiſely decided, good Men protected, and Villains ſeverely puniſhed:

* *Exod.* iii. 8.

All this is done at home, without any unneceſſary contrived Delays. Juſtice knocks at our very Doors, and brings its Benefits to the Place of our Dwellings. So far are we the Envy, and Praiſe of the whole Earth; ſo much are we exalted by the Laws and Righteouſneſs of our Conſtitution.

As for thoſe in whoſe Hands Providence has intruſted the Executive Power; it would argue as much Boldneſs to pretend to praiſe, as it would Preſumption to cenſure. The firſt is a proper Taſk for thoſe *that ſtand continually before* our gracious Prince, and are happy Witneſſes of the Royal Vertues. Our Buſineſs is with thankfulneſs to acknowledge the Benefit of them; and with Confidence to rely on thoſe Aſſurances of his Goodneſs he has been pleaſed to give us from the Throne. We are ſure he loveth our Church and Nation; and regards his great Truſt no farther, than as it puts it in his Power of rendering his Subjects an Happy and Flouriſhing People. We muſt be greatly wanting in that Righteouſneſs which the wiſe Preacher recommends, ſhould we injuriouſly diſtruſt, or ungratefully forget his kind Intentions towards us.

THE Laws he makes the Meaſure of his Power, and the Proſperity of his Kingdom the ſole End of his Care: Nor can Malice charge him with deviating from the firſt, or neglecting the laſt. So that to Cenſure the Royal Vertues would be equally Inſolent and Injurious.

TO enlarge this moſt agreeable View of our Country; one Vertue muſt not be omitted, for which this good-natured Nation is peculiarly eminent; its Kindneſs to diſtreſſed Kingdoms, and oppreſſed Strangers. It has been a conſtant Refuge to the one, and a ſure and inviting Aſylum to the other. This Humanity, and Benevolence, ſhall be carried up to Heaven by the Prayers of the Relieved, and bring down for us a Bleſſing from the All-Righteous, and benign Deity.

DID not Truth and Verity compel us, here Decency would call upon us to ſtop, and not expoſe *the nakedneſs of the Land.* But it cannot be diſſembled that we have Sins and Vices amongſt us, ſufficient to grieve a *righteous Soul*, and make a Pious Heart to tremble. Infidelity and Irreligion rather gain than loſe Ground: Luxury and Debauchery often offend our Eyes,

Eyes, and Prophaneneſs and execrable Curſing and Swearing (Sins as fooliſh as they are heinous) are every Day heard in our Streets. Mean Arts of Deceit, and low Cunning, are much cheriſhed and made uſe of; and open Fraud, and over-reaching, when ſafe from the Penalty of the Law, impudently avowed, or jeſtingly made light of. Not to mention thoſe more enormous Crimes which directly come under the Eye of the Law, and which it is the Buſineſs of this Solemn Meeting to correct, and puniſh: Though it cannot eſcape Obſervation, that notorious Cheats, and Robberies have of late been more than common. But theſe are Wickedneſſes to be puniſhed by the Judge, and do not ſo fitly fall under our Reprehenſion. But ſuch Sins, and Vices as elude the Cogniſance of the Law are due Matter of our Animadverſion and Reproof. We muſt not therefore paſs by that bitter Spring of this Kingdom's Unhappineſs, that fierce and eager Spirit of Strife, and Contention, which like Wild-fire has ſeized upon all Corners of the Land: It has produced (as it muſt naturally do) abundance of Ill-Will, Malice, and Revenge; has made us Strangers, and Enemies to one another; has diſſolved the Ties of Blood, Friendſhip, and Honour; and totally extinguiſhed mutual Love, and Charity.

rity. It is a Madneſs by which moſt ſuffer, and no one gains. It has produced virulent Quarrels amongſt Equals, Oppreſſion of Inferiors, and Inſolence to Superiors: To which has been joined an open Contempt of Authority, and which is ſtill worſe in ſome, an avowed Diſaffection to the preſent moſt happy Eſtabliſhment, to its great Reproach and Detriment. By theſe Means is our Country diſtreſſed, its Tranquillity diſturbed, and its Peace and Repoſe delayed; and a ſtrong Encouragement, and unnatural Aſſiſtance is given to our inveterate Enemies, to bring an univerſal Deſolation upon the Land, and to ſweep away from the Face of it, all that is valuable to us as Engliſhmen, and Chriſtians.

THESE are the Sins of the Land, which make us liable to the Wrath, and juſt Judgments of God: Theſe are the Blemiſhes, and Vices of the Kingdom, which are its greateſt Plagues, and threaten its Miſery and Ruin.

HAVING thus remarked upon the moſt eminent Vertues, and the moſt notorious Vices current amongſt us; it remains that I make ſome ſhort Obſervations from what has been diſcourſed upon.

I. FROM

I. FROM hence Governours and Magiſtrates may learn how to make themſelves a Bleſſing to a People, and highly exalt the Kingdom they preſide over. Their Vertues and Vices are of moſt extenſive Conſequence: And like the largeſt Rivers whoſe overflowing enrich, or lay waſte the greateſt Tracts of Land. The exerciſe of Vertue, and Righteouſneſs by them is a great, and indiſpenſable Duty to their Country, and what their High Truſt obligeth them to in the ſtrongeſt manner.

---- BUT it is unneceſſary to ſay more on this Head, before thoſe who have not their Duty to learn, or to begin to practiſe, who want not to be inſtructed in Juſtice and Righteouſneſs, or to be animated and ſtirred up to the exerciſe of them; and whoſe Behaviour affords rather a Leſſon for Imitation, than a Subject of Advice and Exhortation.

II. HENCE it may be obſerved, how much Religion ſhould be the Magiſtrate's Care: For Religion is the very Soul of Vertue, without which it would languiſh, and wither away: The Paſſions of Men being too volatile to attend to the intrinſick Charms, and Value of it. Atheiſm,

theiſm, Infidelity, and Prophaneneſs are (tho' not in ſo heinous a degree) Crimes againſt the Civil Magiſtrate; they primarily are High-Treaſon againſt Heaven, and ſecondarily againſt the Princes of the Earth. At theſe a wiſe Prince will bend his Diſpleaſure; and ſuch as adviſe him to act the part of *Gallio*, and to be indifferent in Matters of Religion, adviſe him to be careleſs to his greateſt Intereſts, and negligent of the beſt Means of his Subjects Safety. Princes promoting and encouraging Religion are not acting out of their Sphere, and invading the Prieſtly Office; but are purſuing the moſt prudent, and laudable Way of preſerving their own Authority, and furthering the publick Happineſs.

III. When the Miniſters and Servants of the Prince of Peace recommend publick Virtue, Juſtice and Concord; and rebuke publick Vice, Unrighteouſneſs and Contention: They do not officiouſly meddle with Politicks, but diſcharge part of the Commiſſion which they have received from him, who conſtantly recommended Peace, and Love to his Diſciples when amongſt them; and at his parting from them, left them that moſt invaluable Legacy of his own Peace, in theſe Words. * *My Peace I leave with*

* St. John xiv. 27.

you,

you, my Peace I give unto you. They certainly do Service to the great Lover of Mankind when they exert the Talents he has entruſted them with, in preſſing upon the Conſciences of Men, a chearful Submiſſion to Authority, a ſtrict Regard to Oaths, a conſtant Affection to the Publick, and a quiet and peaceable Demeanour. They then in their Province promote the Nation's Happineſs; and ſure that can be no Crime. If any *blow a Trumpet in Sion*, and trouble the Peace of our *Iſrael*, if they arrogantly intermeddle with the Affairs of State, and arraign the Conduct of their Superiors before the People: They may ſay with St. *Paul*, * *We have no ſuch Cuſtom neither the Churches of God.* It is their Duty to expoſe in general all Vice without Reſerve, and to reprove every Evil Work, ſo they do not confine their Reflections to particular Perſons. And St. *James* tells us, † *Where Envying and Strife is, there is Confuſion, and every evil Work.* They cannot therefore in Complaiſance, or Fear of the Paſſions and Humours of Men, repreſent Envying and Strife otherwiſe than as very ſinful and vicious; or ſilently ſit ſtill, and ſuffer People to be led away with a Notion of there being any Virtue, or Merit, in random Cenſures, fiery Zeal, and furious

* 1 Cor. xi. 16. † St. James iii. 16.

Conten-

Contention. No! They once brought an entire Deſtruction upon the Land; tore up the Conſtitution in Church, and State; ſpilt the Blood of our King and Nobles; and gave ſuch deep Wounds to the Happineſs of the Kingdom, that a Space of Fourſcore Years has not yet been able to heal.

Fourthly and *laſtly*, If Virtue exalteth a Nation; what Obligation doth every true Lover of his Country lie under to be a good and honeſt Man! In vain elſe ſhall our Governours be juſt, and prudent, if the Community be falſe and evil. In vain ſhall the Head contrive, if the Members will not perform their Functions. If the Body of the Government be faulty, let the main Springs be never ſo well order'd and adjuſted, the Wheels ſhall ſtand ſtill, or their Motion be irregular, and confuſed. How neceſſary is it then for every true *Engliſhman* to enter the School of Virtue, and there * *ſtudy to be quiet, and do his own Buſineſs*? Study indeed, for it is not ſo eaſy a Matter as may be imagined. It will coſt ſome Pains, and Trouble to ſtruggle with thoſe Paſſions which puſh Men on to be reſtleſs and uneaſy: But let not the Difficulties be any Diſcouragement;

* 1 Theſſ. iv. 11.

for Peaceableneſs is a Virtue of no ſmall Stamp, Size, or Conſequence; it will well reward every Man's Labour; it is the Product of Candor, Modeſty, and good Nature; and when it prevails is like Coolneſs in a Conſtitution, an infallible Sign of vigorous Health, as tumultuous fiery Spirits are Symptoms of a deadly Diſeaſe. Let it bring along with it a due Value, and Deference for Authority, and a chearful Submiſſion to it: This is the higheſt, and firſt Duty of a Member of Society, and a Virtue abſolutely neceſſary to the well-being, and even the Exiſtence of a State. Authority is of ſuch infinite Advantage to Mankind, that the All-good Deity has challenged it for his own Gift and Appointment. The *Reſiſters* of it are impious *Reſiſters* of God's own *Ordinance*, and the Oppoſers of it are wicked Oppoſers of their Nation's Happineſs. Authority was ordain'd not for the ſake of the Governours, but the Governed, who all have an equal Share in the Benefit, tho' not in the Exerciſe of it. It is no leſs the Majeſty of the whole People than of the Prince, and as neceſſary for their Safety, as his Honour. All good Men therefore will heartily ſupport and aſſiſt it, and look upon all factious, and ſeditious Oppoſers, as Perſons aiming a deadly Stab at the very Vitals of their ſupreme Happi-

neſs

neſs and Glory. But what ſhall be ſaid? What Indignation ſhall riſe in every generous Breaſt? when this ſhall be found to be done in contradiction to the moſt expreſs and repeated Oaths. And yet it is evident that no Man can be a bad Subject, before he is a perjured Criminal; he muſt firſt ſet the Almighty at defiance, before he commenceth War againſt his King. But to ſay no more of a Sin which Charity will not permit to think otherwiſe, than that it is as uncommon, as it is heinous.

LET every one remember that the Vertues of a Kingdom are the Summ of the Vertues of particular Perſons; which like the Conflux of many ſmall Streams, compoſe the full Tide of a Nation's Felicity. Let every ſingle Perſon then caſt in his Mite into the Treaſury of publick Happineſs, and contribute his ſhare towards exalting the Kingdom. And then whatſoever ſhall be its Fate, neither his Country, nor Conſcience ſhall have any thing to upbraid him with; and in thoſe happy Regions, where Juſtice and Honeſty always have their Deſert, ſhall he meet with an Eternal Reward.

TO compleat then the Nation's Happineſs. Let all be Juſt to God by Piety, and

and Holineſs; Juſt to their Prince, by Loyalty, and Peaceableneſs; Juſt to their Neighbours, by Honeſty, and Brotherly Kindneſs; Juſt to Themſelves and Country, by an inviolable Firmneſs to the Conſtitution both in Church and State; and (as they are built upon the Foundations of Righteouſneſs) be Juſt to Poſterity, by tranſmitting it down ſafe through their Hands. Let not any be perſwaded ſo far out of their Senſes and Underſtanding, as to be brought to Believe that we ought to change our preſent Eſtabliſhment; or if we ſhould, that we ſhould be Gainers by ſo doing. Or that the Superſtitions of an Idolatrous, and Cruel Church are to be preferred before the pure, moderate, and reaſonable Service of our own. That Arbitrary Power is better than Legal Authority, or that our Eſtates and Liberties are ſafer under the Protection of a Popiſh Bigot, than of a Generous Proteſtant Prince.

As We have a Conſtitution worth a good, and wiſe Man's Preſerving, Let no one be indifferent about it: But let an Holy Zeal for our Excellent, and moſt Charitable Religion, and a moſt Hearty and Affectionate Concern for our very happy Civil Eſtabliſhment, influence all our publick Actions. It is impoſſible We

ever

ever ſhould loſe either, but through our own Sins and Vices. If we arm them againſt the Publick Happineſs, we ſhall let looſe againſt it, more terrible Adverſaries than the moſt Potent foreign Enemies, whoſe Power we may ſet at Defiance, if we are careful by our Vertues to preſerve, and reſolute by our Courage to defend our much envied and glorious Conſtitution. Let every one therefore, that would ſuſtain the Character of a valuable, and uſeful Member of Society, and a true Patriot to his Country, be a Vertuous, Brave, and Honeſt Man.

To conclude. Let us all with moſt Earneſt, and Joint Prayers, beſeech the Almighty (the Work of whoſe Hands it muſt be) to compoſe our Diviſions, and heal our Breaches, and inſpire us all by his Divine Grace, with united Vertue and Righteouſneſs to exalt this Nation.

FINIS.

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